

1748. Journal of Capt. Cleaver Melven with 18 men under his Command, in the Wilderness Toward Crown Point.

- May 13. March'd from fort Dummer to N^o. 2, and then Camp'd.
14. March'd to N^o. 4. Made no Discovery of the Enemy.
15. Sunday in the Evening, March'd with Capt. Stevens and Capt. Hobbs to the Mouth of Black River and Crossed the Great River and Camp'd.
16. March'd about 14 Miles, Crossed a Branch of Black River, which runs from Sheatney, Made no Discovery.
17. March'd a N.W. point, about 13 Miles, Came to a large Branch of Black River and Camp'd. Saw no New Signs of the Enemy.
18. March'd a W.N.W. point, about 3 miles, crossed Black River, kept the same Point about 9 miles further, over the Height of Land, and Camp'd. Saw no New Signs of the Enemy.
19. March'd a N.W. Point, Crossed Several large Streams, being Branches of Otter Creek. Saw many Signs of the Enemy, both old and new, as Camps, Trees Reddied, &c. March'd about 10 Miles this day, and Camp'd after we had sent out proper Scouts.
20. March'd about 6 miles a N.W. point, Down Otter creek, there parted with Capt. Stevens and Capt. Hobbs, who thought proper to take another Course, - March'd over Otter creek, kept a N.W. point, about 8 miles, and came again to the River about one mile below some large falls, - Crossed a large Stream which runs into Otter creek on the west Side, a little below the falls and Camp'd. Saw no Signs of the Enemy very new.
21. Being Rainy weather, March'd but about 2 miles and Camp'd.
22. March'd N.W. by N. Down Otter creek, about 10 Miles, then took a N.W. point, and march'd about 10 miles further, saw several Camps, made last winter, also saw tracks and some considerable beaten paths made by the Enemy, but not very new.
23. March'd N.W. about 3 miles, - Came to a large Camp, fenced in with a very thick fence, where we found a Cagg of about 4 Gallons, which appeared to be newly emptied of wine, as plainly appeared by the Smell.

Smell, and about 12 pound of good French Bread:-
the Bread we took and Divided among our selves. Kept
May the same Point about 11 miles further, and Camp'd,
making no further Discovery.

24. March'd N.W. about 10 miles, and Came to Lake
Champlain about 4 o'clock. March'd about 3 miles
Down the Lake and Camp'd, Making no Discovery of
the Enemy.

25. in the Morning, heard 5 Guns, about 2 or 3 miles
Distant as we Judged, but Could not tell which way,
whether up or Down the Lake. March'd Down the Lake
Northward about 3 miles, Discovered a large Canoo with
Sails Coming from the Southward, with Six Indians in
it, who Passed by us at so great a Distance that we
Could not hear them. Soon after, another Canoo
followed them, with 12 Indians, whereupon we ran
to a point of Land, about half a mile Distant
Toward Crown Point fort, and they Coming within
about fifty or sixty Rods, and apprehending we
might make some Spoil upon them, and fearing
we should have no better opportunity, we agreed
to fire upon them, and accordingly fired six times
Each in about 3 or 4 minutes. The first Shot they
all lay Down Close in the Canoo, and did not
Show their Head till the 3^d Shot, when they made
a most Terrible out-cry, cut down their Sails and
about Six, got to paddling from us as fast as
Possible. At the fourth Shot we made, they fired
3 Guns at us one of which waded our men, and immediately
they fired 3 Guns at Crown Point, which we Judged to be
4 pounders, and at about a mile Distant by the
noise and the Rising of the Smoke, which Rose
like a Cloudy Pillar; then we Carefully Retreated,
Marching East thro' a very thick Part of drowned
Land, 3 or 4 miles, the water Great Part of the way
about mid leg Deep; then we took a S.E. Point,
and travelled about 10 miles and Camp'd:- heard
Several great Guns at Crown Point, as also a next
morning.

26. March'd a S.E. point, about 5 miles, Saw the Tracks of
about

May

about 150 or 200 of the Enemy Gone that Morning, having got upon our Tracks where we went to the Lake - then we took a South Point and marched about 11 miles further, and Camp'd.

27. Marched S.S.E. about 10 miles, Came to Otter Creek about one mile below the first falls, March about 4 miles above the falls, and Camp'd, after sending out Scouts as was our constant practice.

28. March'd up Otter Creek to the Crook, about 6 miles, then we took up the South Branch of Otter Creek, and march'd about 10 miles and Camp'd.

29. March'd up the South Branch of Otter Creek to the Head of it, then Steered S.E., Travelled over a Large Mountain, Leaving another large Mountain on the N.W. Keeping our Course down the mountain, we crossed several Streams we supposed to be the Head of Saratoga River. March'd this day about 16 miles.

30. march'd S.S.E. about 6 miles, Came upon a branch of west River, - travelled Down the River about 8 miles and Camp'd.

31. our Provision being very short, we began our march before Sun rise, and travelled till about half after nine o'clock: being by the Side of the River several of the Company Desired to Stop to Refresh themselves, being faint and weary, whereupon we halted and began to take off our Packs, and some were set down, and in about half a minute after our Halting, the Enemy arose from behind a log and several trees, about 20 feet or 30 at farthest distant, and fired about 12 guns at us, but do not know whether any Men Received any hurt, tho so Near; whereupon, I Called to the men to face the Enemy and Run up the Bank, which I did my self, and several others attempted, but the Enemy were so thick, they could not. I was no sooner Jump't up the Bank, but the Enemy were just upon me. I discharged my gun at one of them, about Eight feet from the muzzle of my gun, who I see fall, and about the same time that I discharged my gun, the Enemy fired

Capt. Eleazer Melvin's

Journal

Recd June 18 1748

fired about 20 Guns at us, and Killed 4 men, Namely John Howard, Isaac Taylor, John Dod and Daniel Man. The Men which were left alive, Most of them fired immediately on the Enemy, Several of which Shots did Execution, as can be witnessed by Several who see the Enemy fall; but Seeing the Enemy Numerous and their Guns being discharged, they Retreated. Several Ran across the River, where they had Some of them opportunity to fire again at the Enemy. Some Ran up the River, and Some down, and Some into a thicket on the same Side of the River. For My own Part, after I saw my men Retreat, and being beset by the Enemy with Guns, Hatchets and Knives. Several of them attempted to Strike at me with their Hatchets Some threw their Hatchets, one of which, or a Bullet, I cannot certainly tell which, carried away my belt and with it my Bullets, all except one I had loose in my Pocket. I Ran down the River, and Two Indians followed me and Ran almost Side by Side with me, Calling to me 'Come Captain', 'Now Captain', but upon my presenting my Gun towards them tho' not charged, they fell a little back and I Ran cross the River, Charged my Gun, moved a few Steps, and one of them fired at me, which was the last Gun fired. I looked back, and saw Nine of the Enemy Scalping the Dead men, and Six or Seven Running across the River, and Several about the Bank of the River very busy, which I apprehend were carrying off their Dead. I then being alone got to the Side of a hill, in Sight of the Place of Battle, and there Seated my self to look for Some of my Men, and to see if the Enemy made any Shout as is Customary with them when they get the Advantage, but hearing No more of them, Nor seeing any of my men I made the best of my way to Fort Sumner, where I arrived the next day before Noon, where one of my men was got in about an Hour before me, and Eleven more came in, in a few Hours, tho' in Several Companies. Joseph Petty was wounded, and I have not yet heard of him. Samuel Severns, I imagine is taken. I went out next day with about forty men to Bury the Dead, and Spent one day in looking for Joseph Petty, who was wounded, but could not find him.*

Eleazer Melvin

* It was found afterwards that Severns & Petty were killed by the Indians.